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To Whom It May Concern: Public Service Commission of South Carolina

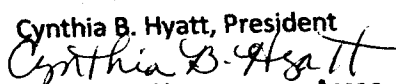
From: Bear Grass Homeowners Association

The residential rate increases Duke Energy proposes are much like throwing pebbles into a pond. The rippling effects of the increases hinder all residents' abilities to pay for other services and goods they need. Those who have opportunities to earn incomes with pay raises and bonuses tolerate the rate increases more easily. Those of us who live on fixed incomes find it more and more difficult to pay for these increases, regardless of how small or great they are.

The current 16% rate increase Duke Energy is proposing for the residents of Bear Grass Townhome Community is comparable to a tsunami. Each of our senior citizens will have to pay more for their own electricity usage, plus the rate increase will cause their homeowners association fees to have to absorb the cost of paying for the increase in charges for the seven electric lights used for safety on our property. The globes on those lights are obsolete. Recently, one globe had to be replaced at an added cost of \$7.45 each month. When all seven are replaced that comes to \$52.15 monthly. The total would be \$625.80 for one year. With a 16% rate increase of \$100.13, we would pay annually \$725.93 just for the replacement globes! Now add to that the 12 months of electricity usage charges; then multiply that by the 16% rate increase (or whatever rate is approved). Long story short, when we have to replace those globes, our association has to pay for those charges and electricity usage charges, as well as any rate increases Duke Energy is granted. Then the association has to raise our homeowners' association fees. The tsunami of electricity costs denies our senior citizens from using what money they have to purchase other services and goods...and those services and goods continue to have increases in costs. Is it any wonder why our residents can only afford to live in homes which range in price from \$33,000 to \$65,000? How many Duke Energy executives or S. C. Public Service Commissioners would like to trade places with us?

Duke Energy has already received several rate increases since the year 2000. It is suggested that Duke Energy stop spending so much on advertising, and stop sending the "My Home Energy Report" reminders each month for how to save energy. Also, remember the lesson of Aesops' fable "The Fox and the Grapes". Be careful of what you want. It may not be what you needed after all. In other words, does Duke Energy need another residential rate increase? Residents living on fixed incomes do not need this burden. We are doing the best we can with what we have. Duke Energy needs to follow suit with doing the best they can with what they have, not with what they think they want.

Sincerely,

Cynthia B. Hyatt, President  
  
Bear Grass Homeowner Assoc.

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